

Post Hospital of Fort Mackinac
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County
Michigan

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Michigan

Historic American Buildings Survey
F. Orla Varney, District Officer
313 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

POST HOSPITAL OF FORT MACKINAC
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County
Michigan

OWNER: State of Michigan.

CUSTODIAN: Mackinac Island State Park Commission -
Mr. Manfred Burleigh, Chairman.

DATE OF ERECTION: 1828.

ARCHITECT: Unknown.

BUILDERS: American artisans and soldiers attached to Fort Mackinac.

PRESENT CONDITION: Fair.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION: The exterior walls are constructed of 8x8 squared timbers tenoned into channels in upright square posts at the corners and at intermediate points. They have been sided with 1x10 boards which appear to be very old if not original. The floor is on heavy timbers resting directly on the ground except for a small basement below the sick-ward. This originally contained a brick cistern and since 1923 has accommodated a furnace for the use of the modern hospital. The roof is framed of mortised and tenoned timbers with cross trusses spaced approximately every (9) nine feet and is of very substantial construction. There is a limestone wall around the basement of the building but elsewhere the sills are resting on huge stones. These have sunk until now the earth directly supports the rotting members. The huge central chimney is original and of limestone construction. It contains two fireplaces. The sick-ward at the north was originally heated by a stove which used a small brick chimney supported on the wood partition. This has now disappeared and a huge stone chimney was built at the north to accommodate the heating plant in 1923.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: The records of the War Dept., contain references to this building in the old inspection reports.

ADDITIONAL DATA: The hospital building occupies approximately the site of a log Provision Store building brought over from the mainland on the ice in 1780. It was one of the original group comprising Fort Mackinac as built by the British on the island. This building we find described in a report dated 1796 as being - "A log building, 115 feet long by 25 feet wide, two stories high, in good condition". It probably

ADDITIONAL DATA: (Continued)

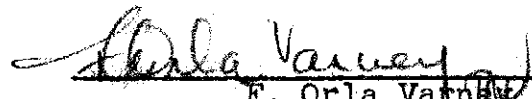
burned and a hospital was built near the site about the year 1817 by the Americans. This structure also burned as noted in an early letter dated June 1828 and the present hospital was constructed as a part of the extensive building program of that same year.

It was used as the Post Hospital until the larger and more isolated "Surgeons Hospital" was built on the east bluff in 1858. The south addition and the north chimney were added in 1923 but otherwise the present building remains as constructed after the fire in 1828.

The hospital is in very good condition except that the under-floor construction needs attention. The old sills and joists are badly rotted and should be raised and renewed. The area below the floor might well be dug out and the space ventilated. The building contains the original doors, hardware, and mantels which are all well designed and worthy of careful preservation.

The above data was taken from a report compiled by the writer on the history of Fort Mackinac. It was prepared for the National Park Service during 1934 and entailed months of careful research.

(Signed) "Warren L. Rindge"
District Officer
December 15, 1936.


F. Orla Varnes
District Officer
May 3, 1937.

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